THE NEW LEADER

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Executive Editor
MYRON KOLATCH

August 28, 1967

Mr. Daniel Ellsberg
c/o Marriott Twin Bridges Motor Inn
Alexandria
Virginia

Dear Mr. Ellsberg:

In discussing the war in Vietnam, our mutual friend, Dan Jacobs, mentioned that you had just returned and he was eager to hear your impressions. As he explained, you are in an unusual position to know what the situation actually is, rather than having to rely on other people's more or less accurate reports. May I invite you to do a short piece for the New Leader?

I understand that you have been serving in an extremely sensitive position and may not be eager to rush into print now that you are again on the outside. However, there are two tacks that lend themselves to the topic without forcing more of an analysis than you might wish to give: 1)a straightforward description of the pacification program; and 2) you personal experiences in Vietnam and upon returning.

Everyone talks about pacification these days, but no one has brought the system up to date--that is, explained exactly what the pacification program is in August 1967. The first approach would have the advantage of being a factual report to define pacification, while at the same time leaving room for as much or as little opinion as you would like to insert. The second would, of course, allow you to write in very personal terms.

I hope very much that you will consider writing something for us--there are few people writing on Vietnam who have been as intimately involved at so many levels. Any clarification you could offer would be a service to the uneasy debate now going on. While we can unfortunately offer our writers very little money--a $50 honorarium--we can offer a wide-open forum.

In addition, should you be interested in reviewing any current books (on US politics, international affairs, etc.), we would like very much to hear from you. Please let us know if there is any new title which you would particularly like to cover.

I hope a stay in Washington will undo the ravages of the Vietnam climate--but I am a wee bit skeptical about the Washington climate!

Sincerely,

Barbara Fultz

Barbara Fultz, Associate Editor

September 13, 1967 L-16999

Miss Barbara Fultz
Associate Editor
The New Leader
212 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10010

Dear Miss Fultz:

Thank you very much for your invitation to do a piece for The New Leader. However, as you guessed, I don't yet feel that I can write publicly about my experiences or attitudes concerning Vietnam, since I am still engaged full-time in research and consultation for the government. I could, no doubt, write a non-controversial "straightforward description" of the purposes and processes of the pacification programs, but I would not, frankly, be interested in doing that. I find myself so critical of the implementation, the limited goals and the prospects of our pacification efforts that I would not feel willing to write merely a descriptive account of the program without expressing my strong reservations about it; and in turn, so long as I have an audience for these views within the government I don't think it would be appropriate or useful to turn to more public channels. The same issues would arise, I'm afraid, with most anecdotes of my personal experiences that would be worth relating.

All these considerations could well change for me in the future, and I will let you know if they do. I appreciate your interest. Incidently, Dan Jacobs mentioned to me that he had raised the question of reviewing Hilsman's book. That would, in fact, be a very convenient vehicle for raising a number of subjects and expressing my views on Vietnam; but for the reasons above, I don't wish to use that opportunity at this time.

My reservations about publishing do no apply to background discussions, and I would be glad to get together with you or any of your editors, if you would like, when I am in New York or when any of you are in Washington or Santa Monica. My forwarding address is The RAND Corporation, 1700 Main Street, Santa Monica, California 90406. In Washington, I can be reached, or messages left, either at The RAND Office, 396-5000, or at OX 5-4221.

Sincerely yours,

Daniel Ellsberg

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